

THE Airstream

910th Airlift Wing

June 2004 Special Issue

Vol. 20, Issue 6 Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio (AFRC)



*Special Edition:
Saying Farewell
to a General
and a Friend*



Photo by Master Sgt. Bryan Ripple

After serving his country for over 36 years with the Air Force and Air Force Reserve, Brig. Gen. Michael F. Gjede retires June 20, 2004.

By Brig. Gen. Michael F. Gjede Commander

Writing this last column is probably not the hardest task I've undertaken during my career but it certainly ranks near the top. There is a tendency to want to summarize my whole career interspersed with pearls of wisdom on leadership and flying. But that would probably not be of much interest to most people. Instead I'll concentrate on the past six plus years... those spent at the 910th Airlift Wing.

Most people cannot say that the best years of their career were the last ones because they may have been pushed aside toward the end just to finish out their time. Happily I'm not one of those people. In my opinion, I'm retiring at truly the high point of my career, and I've been here for over six years! What reason do I have for saying that? I'll give you about 1,500 reasons. It's without a doubt because of you, the great people of Youngstown Air Reserve Station that I've been commander of, friends with and associated with, I feel the way I do.

During my 36-plus year career, I've been a member of a number of wings and each one has for a variety of reasons been really special. But the common thread I've found, what really makes a wing special is to no surprise the people.

You have a work ethic not found everywhere in our great country. You

possess a can-do, "want to do it and do it right" attitude. You look for solutions to seemingly unsolvable problems. You volunteer beyond my wildest expectations and your generosity to the less fortunate is quite frankly overwhelming.

The 910th is a solid team. When the going gets tough I know the combined forces of civilian, military and contractor members will mold into one solid family and overcome any challenge or obstacle to success. Like any family there will always be differences of opinion when tackling an issue but when it comes to the mission- the very reason for our existence- the team pulls together.

You have made my job not only easy but truly enjoyable. I have never gotten up in the morning and wished I didn't have to go to work because of issues at the base. If in some small way I've made it easier for you to do the job you do, then I'll consider my time at the 910th successful.

Together we've achieved a lot. This wing has always been the first to volunteer to lead no matter what the calling. We stepped up and led the way in implementing Operation NOBLE EAGLE while sitting homeland defense alert at McChord Air Force Base, Wash. We stepped up and volunteered for the first "new look" AMC Operational Readiness Inspection and in fact were the first to complete that arduous task. We also

Wing Commander set to retire June 20; extends thanks to unit members

successfully completed an HSI, UCI, ECAMP and ASEV all in a two-month period in 2001. We were on a roll that year! We then led the way into Operation JOINT FORGE and ENDURING FREEDOM and subsequent activations in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. I always felt most comfortable and most confident when the 910th was in the leadership role because I knew exactly what you folks were made of.

We have also made tremendous strides in improving our relations with one of the most supportive communities on the planet. Because of all your efforts the people of the Mahoning Valley feel more knowledgeable and more connected to the mission of the 910th and we in turn should feel more connected to our great neighbors.

Jerlynn and I are about to start a new and hopefully exciting chapter of our lives. What we specifically will be doing is yet to be determined. I will promise you this though. We will do whatever we can to help ensure the future of the base. You are an amazing group of people and work in an amazingly supportive community. You took us in when we arrived from the 934th Airlift Wing in Minneapolis and welcomed us into your family. You supported me when given the privilege of being your commander and celebrated with us as I was honored to be promoted as the first sitting general officer at the 910th Airlift Wing. Now Jerlynn and I owe it to this wing and community to try to give something back.

I know you'll give Col. Tim Thomson and his wife Cheryl the same warmth and outstanding support that you've given us over the past six years.

Please take care of each other, respect each other and support each other in all that you do. This is the greatest wing in Air Force Reserve Command because of each one of you. We will miss you all but I know our paths will continue to cross. As you continue to do our nation's work, we'll be proudly watching and cheering.

Wing commander receives 'Honorary Chief' title

By Master Sgt. Bryan Ripple
Public Affairs NCOIC

Throughout military history, non-commissioned officers have formally and informally recognized the officers appointed over them for their superior leadership, dedication, and loyalty.

Prior to the May UTA weekend, the 910th Chief's Group had only bestowed the honored title of 'Honorary Chief Master Sergeant' upon two officers. Brig. Gen. Michael F. Gjede, commander of the 910th Airlift Wing, became the third officer to receive the prestigious honor during a special Chief's Group ceremony held at the Eagle's Nest Club May 2.

The care and attention to detail that went into planning the ceremony were evident as current and retired members of the Chief's Group gathered to honor Gen. Gjede and his wife, Jerlynn.

"The title 'Honorary Chief Master Sergeant' should not be taken lightly, as it is second only to the 'Order of the Sword' as an honor bestowed upon an officer from the enlisted corps," said Chief Master Sgt. Troy Rhoades, president of the 910th Chief's Group.

During the ceremony, nine candles were lit by current and retired members of the Chief's Group, each one signifying the enlisted ranks which serve the United States and the Air Force in times of peace and war. The white candles represented peace and tranquil times, and the red candles signified the blood of those who came before, who laid the foundation, who secured the freedom, and whose strength the current enlisted force grows from.

The last candle symbolized attainment of the top one percent of the Air Force enlisted force, the chief master sergeants.

By lighting the candle, Gen. Gjede signified his acceptance of the title 'Honorary



Photo by Master Sgt. Bryan Ripple

Brig. Gen. and Mrs. Gjede were honored by the ceremony held in their honor.

Chief Master Sergeant."

"The light from this candle is symbolic of the light you have shown when darkness and doubt have been prevalent. As this candle lights the way, so have you lit the way for us. This is why we now accept you as you are, a leader among leaders, and an airman among airman," said Chief Rhoades.

Gen. Gjede, clearly touched by the meaning of the event, said "To be considered to be a member of such an elite group of men and women is an honor beyond comprehension."

Chief Master Sgt. Robert V. Glus Sr, 910th command chief, was clearly moved by the ceremony and related one example to those in attendance of how Gen. Gjede cares about the people under his command.

"Over the winter, we had many deployments in cold, snowy, and icy weather. Gen. Gjede would personally stand outside and see everyone off and wait outside on the flight line until the planes were completely out of sight, watching them depart over the horizon in the sky. I would start walking back in toward the hangar, realize the general wasn't with me, and I'd turn around and he'd still be out there watching the aircraft fly off, said Chief Glus.

"Retiring while we have so many people deployed and fighting the war is one of the things that will bother me the most," said Gen. Gjede.

For many, his support and leadership over the past six years will be remembered for a long time, even after he retires.

The Airstream is published monthly by:

910th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office
Youngstown Air Reserve Station
3976 King Graves Rd., Unit 12
Vienna, OH 44473-5912
Voice (330) 609-1236
Fax (330) 609-1022
airstream@youngstown.af.mil

910th Airlift Wing Commander

Brig. Gen. Michael F. Gjede

Public Affairs Officer

Capt. Brent J. Davis

NCOIC

Master Sgt. Bryan S. Ripple

Public Affairs Staff

Tech. Sgt. Caryn Gardenhire
Tech. Sgt. Kenneth E. Sloat
Tech. Sgt. Clifford A. Widener
Staff Sgt. Shawn David McCowan, *Editor*

PA Assistant

Tia M. Symcheck

This funded Air Force Reserve newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of the Airstream are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force. The editorial content is edited, prepared, and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 910th Airlift Wing. All photos are Air Force photos, unless otherwise indicated.

On the cover...

Brig. Gen. Michael F. Gjede, commander of the 910th Airlift Wing since March 1998, will retire from the Air Force Reserve June 20, 2004 after more than 36 years of service with the Air Force and Air Force Reserve. As a navigator, he has nearly 11,000 flying hours. Photo by Staff Sgt. Shawn David McCowan.

Officers get wrapped up, carried away at 910th

By Staff Sgt. Shawn David McCowan
Public Affairs Specialist

Fun and games included, the 2004 Junior Officer Leadership Development Seminar held here beginning April 22 was more than a good time.

Capt. Marcia Findley-Shaw, JOLDS director, and Mickey Crawford, JOLDS program manager, arranged events including games and lectures from top-notch speakers like Brig. Gen. Tim White, mobilization assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force/Public Affairs.

"This is a great thing for young officers to do early in their career. It starts them off with a strong team mentality and Mickey and Captain Findley-Shaw really put together a great event," said General White.

Over a dozen of the participants said that the entire event was a huge success and hoped all junior officers would attend in the future.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shawn David McCowan

Saturday's activities revolved around team games including a relay calling for team cooperation in order to succeed. One leg of the relay required a teammate to be wrapped up like a mummy and carried to the next stage.

Reserve Officers Association convention held here

By Master Sgt. Bryan Ripple
Public Affairs NCOIC

Chapter 41 of the Reserve Officers Association at Youngstown Air Reserve Station hosted the 79th Annual Ohio State ROA Convention here and at the Avalon Inn April 16-18. About 80 members of the Ohio ROA as well as some of their spouses gathered to discuss various issues affecting Guard and Reserve forces from all branches of military service.

The objective of the Reserve Officers Association is to support a military policy for the United States that will provide adequate national security and to assist in the development and execution thereof. Nationally, the ROA has about 74,700 members and carries a strong voice on Capitol Hill.

Retired Air Force Reserve Brig. Gen. Paul Cooper, is an ROA National Councilman from Ohio, and a former wing commander of the 445th Airlift Wing at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton. He presented a briefing that included the ROA 2003 Legislative Accomplishments, the ROA 2004 Resolutions, and the 2004 Legislative Goals.

According to General Cooper, some of the 2003 legislative accomplishments that the ROA had worked on included: unlimited commissary benefits for reservists, concurrent receipt (limited), military family tax relief, and the right to deduct expenses while traveling over 100 miles and staying overnight at reserve training.

General Cooper mentioned that 2004 would be a busy year for the ROA with legislative goals including TRICARE coverage for all selected reservists, reducing the retirement age eligibility, full concurrent receipt, tax credits for employers of reservists, further tax incentives for reservists, replacing aging equipment at reserve units, improving Montgomery GI Bill benefits, increasing reenlistment bonuses, and properly balancing the total force.

Also speaking during the convention at the military ball was Retired Air Force Reserve Maj. Gen. Robert A. Nester, who was the mobilization assistant to the chief, Air Force Reserve. General Nester's



Photo by Master Sgt. Bryan Ripple

Lt. Cmdr. Richard Carano, president of the Ohio Department of the Reserve Officers Association, addressed the attendees.

speech focused on the ever-expanding role the reserve components are playing in national defense and what history has taught the United States about the importance of using reservists before conflicts erupt throughout the world.

"ROA believes that using Reserve component members as an integral part of our nation's military ensures that the American people will be constantly reminded of the sacrifices of our military personnel and will decide in a timely manner whether the loss and hardship justifies the military mission," said Gen. Nester. "What we do in turn to take care of our Reserve component members as well as their employers will determine the future strength of the program," he said.

The 910th convention committee members that coordinated the event included Capt. Paula Elliot, Maj. Carolyn Milkovich, Capt. Lance Williams, Capt. Pete Milkovich, and 2nd Lt. Tiffany Folmar.

Logistics Readiness Sq. gets new commander

By Tech. Sgt. Ken Sloat
Public Affairs Specialist

The 910th Logistics Readiness Squadron welcomed a new commander in a 1 p.m. ceremony May 1 at the Aerial Port Squadron hangar.

Lt. Col. Bryan C. Miner assumed command from Lt. Col. Dale L. Zimmerman.

Lt. Col. Zimmerman, formerly the commander of the 76th Aerial Port Squadron, has commanded the LRS since its creation in 2003. Lt. Col. Zimmerman is retiring to the Hartsville, Ohio area after 24 years of service.

Lt. Col. Miner's last five assignments have been at Niagara Falls IAP, Niagara Falls, N.Y. and span 14 years of his career.

His former assignments include several command positions such as assistant deputy support group commander of the 914th Mission Support Group and commander of the 914th Civil Engineer Squadron.

He has also been a transportation officer with the 30th APS and chief of operations for the 914th CES.

Lt. Col. Miner has a Bachelor of Science degree in industrial engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, in Troy, N.Y.

He is a graduate of the Air Command and Staff College correspondence course, Squadron Officer School correspondence course and Transportation Officer School.

Prior to joining the Air Force Reserve in 1990, Lt. Col. Miner served four years in the U.S. Army and an additional five years in the Army Reserve and Army National Guard. During his Army service he was a platoon leader, executive officer, battalion construction officer and engineer operations officer.



Lt. Col. Bryan C. Miner receives comand from Lt. Col. Ralph J. Romine, Deputy 910th Mission Support Group Commander.

Ohio native is new Communications Flight commander



1st Lt. Randy P. Jones is joined by his sister, Stacey Jones and their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Gary Jones of Hubbard, Ohio.

By Tech. Sgt. Ken Sloat
Public Affairs Specialist

The 910th Communication Flight here received a new commander in a 3 p.m. ceremony May 1 at Building 510.

Maj. Susan T. Majzun is retiring after seven years as the commander of the 910th Communications Flight. Maj. Majzun is retiring to Amhurst, Ohio after 21 years of service.

Assuming command was Hubbard, Ohio native, 1st Lt. Randy P. Jones.

Lt. Jones' previous assignments include two years as the commander of the 434th Communications Squadron, Grissom Air Reserve Base, Ind.

Lt. Jones also spent one year as the Flight Executive Officer of the 910th Communications Flight.

"It's good to be home among friends," said Lt. Jones.

Lt. Jones has a bachelor's of science and technology degree from Kent State University.

He graduated from the Academy of Military Science at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base, Tenn. in September 2001.

His military decorations include the Air Force Achievement Medal and the Small Arms Marksmanship Ribbon.

Lt. Jones was raised in Hubbard, Ohio and is a 1995 graduate of Hubbard high school.

Special Feature

Three-and-a-half decades of a military career can create a lot of memories, both good and bad. Along with a career of that length comes a lifetime of experience to reflect upon when it ends.

Star of the Show

By Staff Sgt. Shawn David McCowan
Public Affairs Specialist

Three-and-a-half decades of a military career can create a lot of memories, both good and bad. Along with a career of that length comes a lifetime of experiences to reflect upon.

As Brig. Gen. Michael F. Gjede entered his last month as commander of the 910th Airlift Wing and member of the Air Force Reserve, the sense of finality began to set in. Although no boxes were sitting on tables to collect personal belongings, he did start to look around the room at some of the keepsakes on his walls and shelves.

"I should be happy, but I hate this. I love this job and I can't imagine it ending."

Each item on display represented a special event or a special person or group from years past. The reality swept over his face like a chilly mist: He'd soon collect his last memories of his Air Force career.

He sauntered the eight paces from his shelves to his desk and glanced over the paperwork. Tedious as paperwork was, even it held sentimental value right then. They were some of the last papers he'd ever have to sign in his Air Force career.

Instead of taking his place behind his desk, he glanced back over his right shoulder at the photos on the wall over his office couch. Portraits, not pictures, of B-52s, C-141s and C-130s. War machines he'd navigated in peace and wartime.

He eased back and reclined on the stately forest green couch, resting one hand on the walnut armrest and the other across his chest, almost over his heart.

Then the past years and the onset of retirement crept upon him like stretching shadows at sunset, and the familiar comfortable-but-confident gaze of a general started to glaze over. His eyes

drifted to the floor and his thoughts wandered from where it all began to how it would all end.

"I should be happy, but I hate this. I love this job and I can't imagine it ending. It sure doesn't feel like it's been so long," said General Gjede.

Michael was born to the Gjede family in 1945. The family started in the small town of Webster, Mass. Bill and Mary Gjede had another son two years later, whom they named Bill. The four of them spent their first ten years there. The sleepy town's only claim to fame was their lake, which had an enormously long name;

Lake Chargoggagagmanchaw-gagoggchaunagungamaugg. The Native American name means "You fish on that side and I fish on this side and nobody fishes in the middle." Mr. Gjede owned a small manufacturing company that made wood-boring bits.

Michael and his brother attended Webster's small local school until he was ten years old, when Mr. Gjede sold his shop to the Stanley Tool Company and his family moved to Winsted, Conn. He became the purchasing engineer at Son-Chief Electrics where Michael eventually became an apprentice in their tool-and-die-making shop.

While Michael was still only ten, his family was rocked by the news that his mother was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis.

The family was at first understandably shocked. But instead of resigning themselves to depression and despair, they banded even closer together.



Photo by Master Sgt. Bryan Ripple

Safe-Tracker: General Gjede had logged over 10,800 flying hours as a navigator on several military aircraft by his retirement. His skills as both a navigator and a wing commander kept both his aircraft and the 910th Airlift Wing safely on the right path to success.

Special Feature

The boys took over many of the household responsibilities that their mother would have had. Yet no one complained.

"We wanted to make mom happy. Our biggest fear was to disappoint her. There was nothing more important to us than making sure she was happy with our housework and school work."

After school, while other kids were involved in year-round school sports or playing with friends, young Michael Gjede continued working in his father's tool and die shop, helping wherever he could. Although he barely found time to play high school basketball, he never felt he was missing out on anything.

"To me, working after school was normal. I thought that was what all the kids did. It never bothered me that some were playing and I wasn't. I really enjoyed working for my dad. Working for him and helping my mom and taking care of the house taught us all strong family values."

What started as distant bursts became constant explosions that shook their hearts and stomachs beneath their ribs.

Since their mother was eventually confined to a wheelchair, the weekends included house cleaning and yard work, but mom would still do the cooking, since she had particular preferences when it came to dinner time.

"Sometimes she'd get our dinners ready separately, but then make lamb chops for herself. She loved them and she knew we couldn't stand them, so she always had her own dish."

After high school graduation, Michael attended Boston's Northeastern University as a marketing major. At that time it was the largest private institution in the country. Northeastern operated under the "cooperative education" concept. Students worked alternating semesters for pay and job experience. Since Michael was already comfortable working when not in class, he was perfectly happy with the hours of daily work and long weekend duties. He was assigned to an ad agency, but spent most of the time doing the "little things" one would expect when learning the business as a student.



Photo by Master Sgt. Bryan Ripple

General Gjede flew on 140 combat missions aboard B-52s in Vietnam and commanded two wings operating with C-130's, but he spent most of his career, over 15 years, around C-141 airlifters at McGuire AFB, N.J.

"I didn't mind the work as an intern. Hard work was a normal thing for me, and I learned so much just being in the environment. Those people were tough. I learned what a difficult field that is to work in—extremely cut-throat. But the discipline and patience I learned at college and as an intern helped build my skills as a manager and leader."

Michael had no illusions about graduating and moving on to a career in marketing. The Vietnam War was underway, and young adults were faced with the draft. Like most other graduates, he knew he'd be starting his adult life as a member of the military no matter what.

When he reached his fourth year of college, the draft board was already trying to bring him into the military.

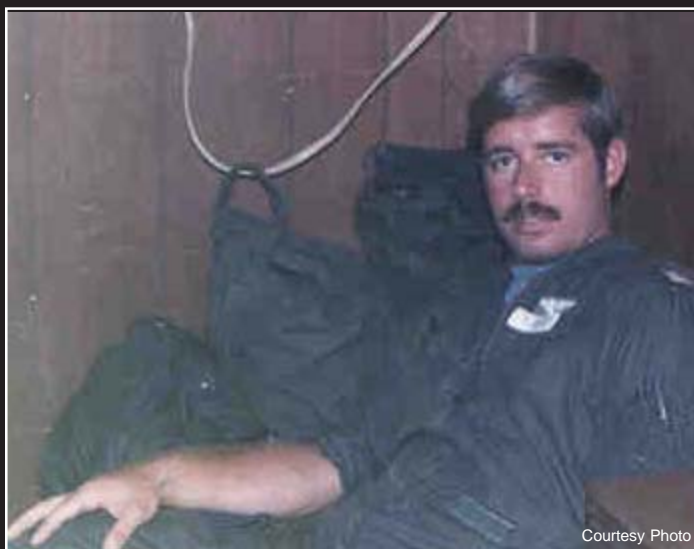
"The draft board didn't realize that I was in a five-year college. None of us were done yet, but they all expected us to be graduating." But as soon as their fifth year was completed, those students were again

faced with both the draft board and this time recruiters.

In 1968, he graduated from college and left for officer training that November. His next two years were spent in navigator school, flying schools and training on the B-52 bomber.

"The whole time I was just doing what I had to do. I never planned on a military career. And I certainly never would have guessed where this would all eventually lead."

In March 1971, Lt. Gjede was assigned to his first base; Loring Air Force Base, Maine.



Courtesy Photo

Between missions in Vietnam, Capt. Gjede returned home just before his mother lost her battle with MS.

Special Feature

As a navigator aboard a B-52 with the 42nd Bomb Wing he had two of the famous 179-day ARC LIGHT tours and he flew over 140 combat missions. His young career carried him into battle early and often with the war in Vietnam raging on.

In December 1972, 27-year-old Captain Gjede and his B-52 crewmates embarked on a harrowing mission that would solidify their nick-name; the “Missile Magnets.” During a night mission, they were directed to be part of a nine-ship mission as one of the first bombing missions over North Vietnam. Their target was Hanoi.

The closer they got to their destination, the heavier the anti-aircraft fire became and the faster the crew’s hearts raced. What started as a few distant bursts quickly became a constant series of explosions that shook their hearts and stomachs within their ribs. Shockwaves jarred the bones of both the people and the great metallic bird of prey. Although a few pieces of shrapnel banged into the plane, no real damage was reported yet.

Their commander couldn’t decide whether to reprimand them for ignoring an order or award them for valor.

With 20 seconds left until they were over the target, the bomb doors were opening and the crew was ready to release their cargo and return to safer air.

That was when the tailgunner saw the flames of a missile coming directly at them through the night. He realized it was coming too fast and too true; they were about to be hit. Capt. Gjede heard the tailgunner’s warning in his headset, and the pilot banked the plane hard to avoid the hit, but it was too late.

The explosion just under the plane’s belly ripped through the bottom of the plane. Sharp, hot shards of metal tore through the machine as if it were made of paper. Alarms began sounding wildly and the bomber screamed in agony as three of the eight engines failed. As Capt. Gjede tried to concentrate on his task, something extremely hot whirled just past his right cheek, and suddenly an area of the navigation station showered the cockpit in sparks.



The “Missile Magnets,” including Capt. Gjede (far left) and one of the B-52’s they flew in Vietnam. They survived many close calls, but none closer than the December 1972 flight.

Smoke was pouring from the damaged engines. Gaping holes were announced by loud whistles throughout the plane. More alarms sounded as fuel poured from holes in the tanks.

The crew decided to drop their payload as close as they could to their target and turn the aircraft around. Once all bombs had escaped, the plane limped toward the gulf, where it could be ditched if it could not get home.

On their way back, the command post radioed that they were to do another air refueling to take on more fuel and do an additional check of the plane’s controls before landing. Once the crew looked outside and around them, they decided they’d be lucky if anything worked one more time, and they preferred that last time be on an American runway in Thailand.

The crew, the plane and all nine ships managed to return. Captain Gjede and his crewmates welcomed the ground beneath their wobbly, nerve-wracked knees and wiped the sweat and dirt from their paled faces. They later decided to count the holes in their ship, and ended up finding 156 of them.

Their commander couldn’t decide whether to reprimand them for ignoring an order or award them for valor.

They were each awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Despite that traumatic night, the “Missile Magnets” climbed aboard another B-52 the next day.

During a break between tours in Vietnam, Captain Gjede got a chance to return home to spend time with his family.

They made the most of their time together with big dinners and late nights full of catching up.

Then they decided to spend a few more days together at their summer cottage on the shore in Rhode Island. After several sunsets the refreshed family packed their things and got ready to return home. Michael and Bill left first in their vehicle and their parents took theirs later.

After waiting at home for quite some time, the boys realized that something was wrong. Mom had been ill that day. Then the phone rang and their worst fear was confirmed: Their mother never made it home. She died on the way from the shore to the hospital.

“We were all stunned and speechless. Mom had been getting sicker for some time, but we had no idea that she was that bad. It really took some time to sink in because it happened out of nowhere. I was just relieved to be home when it happened.”

In 1974, Captain Gjede left active duty. He spent time interviewing with numerous companies but either it was not the job for him or he was not the person for the job. He also interviewed for a reserve position at McGuire Air Force Base. They didn’t have room at the time but would call when they did. After getting turned down for a job he thought would be great, the phone rang asking if he was still interested in a reserve position flying C-141’s.

Following fate he began planning a return to the military as a reservist. He was assigned to the 514th Military Airlift Wing at McGuire Air Force Base, N.J. There he became a C-141 navigator and

Special Feature

later an instructor navigator and finally a flight examiner.

"I didn't plan on spending my whole career on B-52's, and there were so many opportunities in the Reserve. I knew it was time to move on."

One of his missions involved transporting then-President Gerald Ford and then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's limos to Warsaw, Poland for a summit meeting.

"The Polish military totally surrounded the plane and everyone was very heavily armed with rifles. Naturally, none of them spoke English. We all got more than a little nervous until we realized that Felix, our aircraft commander, knew Polish.

"We said, 'Felix, they're here to see you,' and we sent him out."

He was later promoted to Major and assigned as director of current operations and later aircraft operations officer. Before his 15 years at McGuire were completed, he was promoted to Lt. Col. and named assistant director of operations.

"It's funny how, once again, I didn't plan any of that. I went with what I had, and ended up spending over 15 years there."

Once Lt. Col. Gjede got promoted to Colonel in the fall of 1989, the promotion clock began to tick. He needed to have an assignment to match his new rank, and had only 30 days left to accept one.

"I thought I would run out of time and not be able to accept promotion. I went to a scheduled conference and, as luck would have it, I ran into an old friend."

There he and his military friend ended up talking about his problem. His friend matter-of-factly said, "Well, I have an opening at 4th Air Force."

With three days left to get a position, Colonel Gjede flew across the country for an interview in California. With one day left at 3 p.m., he got a callback, but was told to return for another interview.

"On the last day I hoped that I was about to get offered the job, and at home on the east coast, it was already four in the afternoon. If I went home it would have been too late. Hours into the visit in California, we were just walking around touring the place. But when we got back to the offices, the job was offered to me."

He accepted the assignment as director of current operations at 4th Air Force, overseeing many bases. Around the same time General Sherrard took command of the 4th Air Force. After three years including working for General Sherrard as deputy chief of staff of operations, he was finally

offered his first command.

In November 1992, Colonel Gjede was named commander of the 934th Airlift Wing at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, Minneapolis, Minn.

"I took the job with this big smile. Then I walked out of the office and thought, 'Now can I do this?' I remembered my early family life with mom and those combat flights and the teamwork that helped us survive. I knew that I had to rely on everyone to know their jobs and do those jobs. It would be my job to get them whatever they needed to succeed and make them as happy and comfortable as possible."

After he'd proven himself as a successful commander, Colonel Gjede was approached with another command opportunity.

"General Sherrard knows his people. Maybe better than anyone I know. Without any discussion he knew I was coming up on a chance for promotion. He knew I could have another command opportunity at either a tanker base or a C-130 base. I knew the C-130 pretty well and had become very fond of the plane and its mission.

He accepted command of the 910th Airlift Wing and his family packed their things and relocated to their new home in Northeastern Ohio. Colonel Gjede and his wife, Jerlynn, said their goodbyes to their friends and neighbors and headed out on the next leg of life's adventure.

When he arrived in the Youngstown area and his new assignment, he was immediately impressed.

"When we got here and saw the area, we were truly impressed. This is a great place to live. I mean that. And when I met the people of the 910th and the community, I was even more impressed. This is truly a jewel of a base and the people of the local communities are truly good people."


Colonel Gjede's first address was brief but so significant that several people still working at the wing can recite them:

"My commands to you will be few. You know how to do your jobs. I'm here to help you do your job as effectively as possible. I'm also here to make sure your time here is positive and enjoyable and not a chore."

Commanding the 910th would prove to be his last assignment.

In 1999, he was promoted to brigadier general and became the 910th's first sitting general officer.

During his six years at the 910th he faced several challenges. Many were normal for a commander to deal with, but his leadership style allowed the results to constantly keep

A photograph of Colonel Gjede in a green military flight suit. He has a mustache and is looking directly at the camera. An American flag patch is visible on his left sleeve.

"I feel like I have ten more years left in me... so much left undone."

Photo by Staff Sgt. Shawn David McCowan

the base in the spotlight as the standard for the rest of the Reserve to follow.

Under General Gjede, the 910th led the first Inspector General Exercise in 2000. They later successfully faced several major inspections within a two-month period.

General Gjede leaves the Air Force Reserve after over 36 years, three wars and 10,800 flying hours. He leaves behind a series of "firsts" that will be hard to surpass. One of those firsts was the current Operation Enduring Freedom/Iraqi Freedom activation; the largest in the base's history.

"I hate leaving like this. I feel like I have ten more years left in me. There's so much left undone. Especially the deployments. I'm retiring while there are hundreds of our people activated and many still in a war zone. I feel like I'm abandoning them, even though I know they're being left in good hands."

General Gjede plans to continue to contribute in any way he can. He has been on the board of directors for the Base Community Council, Trumbull County branch of the American Red Cross and the Chamber of Commerce. He plans to get more involved with the community but hasn't solidified anything yet.

"Just like much of my military career, I have ideas but nothing solid. Things will happen like they always have. But it's going to take time to adjust."

Back at the Gjede home, they've always wanted to try making wine. They recently began making their first batch of Merlot.

If the grapes age as well as General Gjede's military career has, it'll have a fine bouquet.

SECAF Visits with deployed 910th troops



Photo by Air Force Media Specialist Robin Hicks

Lt. Col. Mark Schierloh, commander of the 76th Aerial Port Squadron, poses for a picture with Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche at Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan.

The Secretary of the Air Force spent some time with 910th Airlift Wing reservists during a recent visit to Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan.

This was Dr. James G. Roche's first visit to the 376th Air Expeditionary Wing at Manas AB.

The secretary's visit was arranged to give Dr. Roche the opportunity to meet personnel deployed there and share his thanks with them.

"This trip is for me to come and spend time with all of you," the secretary said. "We want to see how you are living, what you are doing and to say thank you."

The secretary met with maintenance and operations personnel over dinner, while medical and support personnel joined him for breakfast, said Col. Robert W. Belknap, commander of the 376th Expeditionary Mission Support Group.

Dr. Roche spoke to the group for about 15 minutes before he opened the floor for questions, said Col. Belknap.

"A lot of people are dependent on what you do and I want you to know how much you are appreciated," said Secretary Roche.

Information from a 376th AEW news release was used in this story.



Photo by Marine Corp Cpl. Thomas C. Alston

A Youngstown C-130 lands in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Manas AB is the primary strategic airlift hub for operations in and around Afghanistan and provides tactical airlift and aerial refueling in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Ken Sloat

Watch your foot

Gunnery Sgt. Matthew C. Wilson, a member of the Marine Corps Reserve's 4th Landing Support Equipment company here, gives directions to the driver of a heavy-duty forklift as a 14,000-pound overwatch shelter is lowered onto a concrete pad near the main gate here. The shelter was built by Kontek Industries of New Madrid, Mo. and shipped to Youngstown ARS as a plug-and-play security device.

Employer Awareness Day scheduled

The annual 910th Airlift Wing Employer Awareness Day is scheduled for Aug. 7, 2004. The event provides the perfect time to educate your employer about your service to the United States. Let them see first hand just how important you and your contributions are to the success of the 910th and the defense of America.



Activated and/or deployed reservists are especially encouraged to nominate their civilian employers for this event.

In one action packed day, your boss will have the opportunity to fly on a C-130 Hercules cargo plane, view displays and demonstrations and participate in a base tour.

In addition, your employer will be presented a certificate of appreciation from the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve at a luncheon to be held at the base club as part of the program. The luncheon is for employers only and is provided at no cost to them.

Please print neatly and completely fill out the nomination form included in this month's issue of *The Airstream* and return it to the 910th Airlift Wing Public Affairs office at the address on the flyer.

The deadline for nominations to be provided to the Public Affairs office is July 16, 2004. Due to the time required to prepare letters of invitation to employers and other administrative tasks, your employer's nomination may not be accepted if received after the deadline date.

PROMOTIONS

The following commissioned officers have been selected for promotion to the rank of Major with various pin-on dates:



Johnstephen A. Boccieri, 773rd Airlift Squadron
Vincent Calzola, 757th Airlift Squadron
David F. Kattler, 910th Civil Engineer Squadron
Damon A. Matzye, 910th Maintenance Operations Flt.
Jason L. Salts, 757th Airlift Squadron
Thomas C. McMaster II, 910th Medical Squadron
Michael D. Hebenthal, 910th Aerial Port Squadron
Peter L. Milkovich, 910th Operations Group
Jeffery N. Prochnow, 773rd Airlift Squadron
Dawn K. Sturdevant, 910th Logistics Readiness Sq.
Stephanie A. Welhouse, 910th Services Squadron
Susan E. Chaffee, 910th Medical Squadron



Thomas L. Beasley, 910th Civil Engineer Sq.
Michael J. Dunn, 76th Aerial Port Squadron
Daniel J. Frost, 910th Medical Squadron
Julian A. Garcia, 910th Maint. Squadron
Gordon M. Lindley, 910th Civil Engineer Sq.
Brad A. Meshula, 910th Civil Engineer Sq.
Roger W. Seward, 910th Security Forces Sq.
Jason M. Webber, 910th Logistics Readiness Sq.
Darnell D. Williams, 910th Medical Squadron



Jason A. Moultonwakefield, 910th Airlift Wing
Lakecia A. Rivera, 910th Medical Squadron
Aaron J. Witzigman, 757th Airlift Squadron

NEWCOMERS

Please welcome the following reservists to the 910th Airlift Wing:



David M. Prokop, 910th Maint. Squadron



Craig W. Canniballe, 910th Maint. Squadron
Terrence J. Harrison, 910th Maint. Group
William F. McDonald Jr., 910th Maint. Squadron
Bruce E. Persin, 910th Logistics Readiness Sq.
James H. Weeks Jr., 910th Aircraft Maint. Sq.
Mark S. Zickefoose, 76th Aerial Port Squadron



Daniel L. Bryant, 910th Maint. Squadron
Justin A. Deemer, 910th Civil Engineer Sq.
Douglas D. Kazear, 76th Aerial Port Squadron
James M. Norton III, 910th Maint. Squadron
James L. Pegg Jr., 910th Services Squadron
Charles J. Reilly, 76th Aerial Port Squadron
Mark Rothwell, 910th Logistics Readiness Sq.
Merald D. Simmons, 910th Maint. Squadron
Robert L. Swecker, 910th Maint. Squadron
Carl J. Wolfe Jr., 76th Aerial Port Squadron



Charles J. Edmonds, 76th Aerial Port Squadron
Julia K. Felts, 910th Medical Squadron
Lawrence E. Felts, 910th Medical Squadron
Florin Gargarita, 910th Maint. Squadron
Donald M. Gonzales, 910th Maint. Squadron
Dennis R. Groh, 757th Airlift Squadron
William B. Jones, 910th Logistics Readiness Sq.
Thomas R. Kocis Jr., 910th Maint. Squadron
Thomas C. Morgan, 910th Security Forces Sq.
Shauna L. Morris, 76th Aerial Port Squadron
Edward R. Peggs III, 910th Logistics Readiness Sq.
Dennis E. VanFossen, 910th Maint. Squadron
Scott C. Vranich, 910th Aircraft Maint. Squadron

Lt. Col. Bryan C. Miner, 910th Logistics Readiness Squadron
Capt. Sherif F. Keriakis, 910th Medical Squadron
1st Lt. Randy P. Jones, 910th Communications Flight
Tech. Sgt. Brian E. Murphy, 773rd Airlift Squadron
Tech. Sgt. Venitta L. Tidemore-Brown, 910th Mission Spt. Flt.
Staff Sgt. Ronda Craytonprioieau, 910th Civil Engineer Sq.
Staff Sgt. Timothy R. Gollner, 910th Medical Squadron
Staff Sgt. Vincent A. Repucci, 757th Airlift Squadron
Senior Airman Maurice C. Butler, 76th Aerial Port Squadron
Senior Airman Keith T. Clark, 76th Aerial Port Squadron
Senior Airman Bryan D. Emerson, 910th Maint. Squadron
Senior Airman Jessie J. Mechling, 910th Maint. Squadron
Senior Airman Maritza Y. Ramirez, 910th Medical Squadron
Senior Airman Marcus J. Weisbarth, 910th Security Forces Sq.
Senior Airman Carl A. Laurie, 910th Airlift Wing
Airman 1st Class Aisha S. Graham, 910th Logistics Readiness Sq.
Airman 1st Class William H. Rees, 910th Maint. Squadron
Airman 1st Class Nicholas R. Villani, 910th Security Forces Sq.
Airman 1st Class Jose A. Zavala Jr. 910th Maint. Squadron
Airman 1st Class Marsha L. Zimmerman, 910th Maint. Squadron
Airman 1st Class Fredreka N. Knuckles, 910th Logistics Readiness Sq.
Airman Luke D. Broome, 910th Security Forces Sq.
Airman Randy S. Snyder, 910th Maint. Squadron
Airman Omari A. Smith, 910th Maint. Squadron
Airman Alex M. Davison, 910th Services Squadron
Airman Chase T. Matovich, 910th Maint. Squadron
Airman James A. Claybrooke, 910th Medical Squadron

RETIREMENTS

Brig. Gen. Michael F. Gjede, 910th Airlift Wing, 36 yrs.
Lt. Col. Larry A. Jackson, 910th Maint. Group, 30 yrs.
Lt. Col. Dale L. Zimmerman, 910th Logistics Readiness Sq., 24 yrs.
Capt. Jose M. Palacios, 910th Medical Squadron, 22 yrs.
Senior Master Sgt. Ronald C. Bulford, 910th Maint. Squadron, 33 yrs.
Master Sgt. Gerald E. Rychlik, 910th Aircraft Maint. Squadron, 35 yrs.
Master Sgt. Stephen P. Smith III, 76th Aerial Port Squadron, 26 yrs.
Master Sgt. Carl L. Walters, 76th Aerial Port Squadron, 25 yrs.
Tech. Sgt. Karen M. Brandt, 773rd Airlift Squadron, 26 yrs.
Tech. Sgt. Victor A. Lawver, 910th Maint. Squadron, 20 yrs.
Tech. Sgt. John T. Marhulik, 910th Security Forces Sq., 20 yrs.

It Ain't the Worst

By Honorary 2nd Lt. Louis F. Hayes

There are times in your life,
When you dream of better days.
There are times in your life,
When nothing goes your way.
The world, it seems, just passes by...
You feel alone, and wish to die.

Look up I say, and turn around,
Make something of this stick in the ground.
It may seem bad to you right now,
But trust me, you've got no reason to frown.
Take some advice from someone who knows,
This is life, its how it goes.

Life gives you lemons, "make lemonade,"
Spilled your milk, wipe it away!
There are people in life
With it worse than you, trust me on this
I'm one who knows.

The day may not be great,
You may have had better,
But to me a day with just cramps
Is like homemade butter.

So you broke a bone, yea it seems bad,
But look up and quit feelin sad.
Your healing already, a couple of weeks,
For me its been two years, without sports to beat.

So remember my words, go have some fun,
It won't be forever, the time will be done.
Your life ain't a drag, it ain't the worst.
Get up, get out, there is much worse.

It could happen to you, anytime, any day.
A doctor could tell you, your life's gonna change.
Don't sit there moping, "It can't get wors!"
Trust me man,
You're as wrong as a guy with a purse.



Photo illustration by Master Sgt. Christina F. Bianco

Honorary 2nd Lt. Louis Frederick Hayes

July 10, 1991 - April 7, 2004

Members of the 910th Airlift Wing were saddened when they learned that Louis F. Hayes, 12, passed away after a fierce battle against Leukemia.

Louis had been appointed an honorary 2nd Lieutenant and the 6th Pilot for a Day at the 910th on May 8, 2001 by Brig. Gen. Michael F. Gjede.

Louis enjoyed his visit to the 910th as a Pilot for a Day and his big smile and outgoing attitude warmed the hearts of many people as he toured the base. His pilot mentor for the day, Capt. Casey Keibler, felt a great loss upon learning of Louis' passing. "Louis was a very bright, brave little warrior," he said. "He was a kid that fought hard and enjoyed each moment of his short life."

To write someone from the 910th in Kyrgyzstan:

NAME
376 OG/777 EAS
APO AE 09353

To write someone from the 910th in Kuwait:

NAME
386 EAW/910 AW (Unit)
APO AE 09855

Readership Survey Available On-Line

The editorial staff of The Airstream would like to know your comments about the content of The Airstream. Visit www.afnews.af.mil/internal/survey/survey_index.htm at your convenience. Ten minutes is about all it will take to answer all the questions. You can do this anonymously or you can leave your name in the comments section.

910 AW/PA
YOUNGSTOWN AIR RESERVE STA
3976 KING GRAVES RD UNIT 12
VIENNA OH 44473-5912
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
F.C.C.H. INC.